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## Opposition to Increase of the Navy Steadily Growing.

Though the action of the House of Representatives on January 22 on the report of the Naval Committee was in important respects disappointing, yet, when carefully analyzed, it shows a distinct gain over last year in opposition to further increase of the navy. The President, the Secretary of the Navy and the Naval Board had all recommended and strongly urged the addition of four first-class battleships this year, Secretary Newberry asking that seventy-five millions of dollars should be appropriated for new constructions. This proposal of the Executive Department was turned down by the Naval Committee of the House, by the extraordinary vote of fifteen to three. The Committee recommended only two ships and an appropriation of less than half that asked for by the Secretary of the Navy. When the Committee Report came before the House no effort was made, as was done last year, to put four battleships in the Bill. It was seen in advance that it would be hopeless to attempt to do this. It would seem, therefore, that the four-battleship program of the Executive Department of the government has been finally and definitively rejected. That is certainly of no little significance.

When the bill came before the House, an amendment proposed by Mr. Finley of South Carolina to strike out the two remaining battleships was rejected, but it carried eighty votes in its support as against sixty-five for a similar motion last year. This is also a distinct gain. Mr. Burton's amendment to strike out one of the two ships recommended by the Committee was also defeated, yet one hundred and eight votes were cast in its favor, the negative vote being one hundred and fifty-eight. If this motion had been carried it would have meant no further increase of the navy, as the one new ship remaining would only have been sufficient to make up for an old one going out of commission. It is believed that the Burton motion would have prevailed if a number of Congressmen who are opposed to increase of the navy had voted their full sentiments, as they did last year. For some reason, probably of a purely party nature, several of the Democrats who have hitherto voted against increase failed to support the Burton amendment and voted for the two ships recommended by the Committee.

The friends of limitation in the House certainly made a good showing, considering the limited time at their disposal and the fact that they were handicapped by the tacit agreement reached last winter between the Administration and the Jingoes in the House that two battleships should be put on the program at each session of Congress. The friends of limitation showed great energy, and the speeches made by them in the brief debate were exceptionally vigorous, loyal and to the point. They could scarcely have been better.

The Naval Bill now goes to the Senate, where the action of the House will probably be approved, but possibly by a considerably decreased majority over last year. Senators Burrows, Hale and others have determined to make an energetic stand against the addition of any further battleships to the navy, and they hope to rally to their support the full strength of the limitation sentiment in the Senate.

In the country outside of Congress opposition to the further increase of the navy has clearly gained during the year. There is of course a large section of the people who are carried away by the specious pleas of the Big Navy promoters, who were never more active and noisy than at the present time. These agitators keep the people, especially on the Pacific Coast, excited and alarmed lest the country should be suddenly invaded from three thousand or